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WASHINGTON

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Tele. Room ☒
Miss Holmes ☒
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6457
DECLASSIFIED BY 9803 RAN/EA
ON 4-30-92

February 8, 1964.

PER STATE LETTER dtd 2-21-84
State info unclear ngr 11/4/93

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. J. Edgar Hoover,
Director,
Federal Bureau of Investigation.

I am attaching copies of telegrams exchanged in the Department's Roger Channel with the Embassy in Mexico City which bear on the Oswald case and which the Department is obligated to make available to the Warren Commission. Because of the sensitivity of some of the material in this exchange (see, for example, paragraph 6 in Embassy's telegram 1201 of November 28, 1963), we will seek an understanding with the Commission that there be an opportunity to review any report which might be based on such material and which the Commission may wish to make public. Since these messages contain information that may have been developed by your representatives in Mexico City, I would appreciate receiving your concurrence in our turning these messages over to the Warren Commission for study.

A. Alexis Johnson
U. Alexis Johnson

12 ENCLOSURE

Attachments:

ENCLOSURE ATTACHED
MAR 4 1964

EXP. PROC

FEB 11 1964

Watch out! Leave it
entirely up to State
Dept. what they do
as to material trans-
mitted. I as to any
restrictions they place
on it. We have none.

REC-9

22 MAR 13 1964

21-10383

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INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

39 M

~~SECRET~~

Action

TNRD

Info

RMR

.....ZZ RUEHCR
DE RUESMO 030 28/1820Z
Z 281815Z ZEA
FMAMEMBASSY (MEXICO CITY)
TO SECSTATE WASHDC
STATE GRNC
BT
S E C R E T
SENT SECSTATE (1201) FLASH
ROGER CHANNEL

FOR SECRETARY RUSK AND ALEXIS JOHNSON

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR TELEGRAM 961. PERHAPS I SHOULD DESCRIBE BRIEFLY THE BACKGROUND FOR MY RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE OSWALD CASE.

1. IN READING OSWALD'S RATHER COMPLETE DOSSIER I GOT AN IMPRESSION OF A TRUCULENT, AGGRESSIVE, DEMANDING PERSON, TOO LAZY TO STICK LONG WITH EITHER SCHOOL OR JOB, WHO WAS IN REBELLION AGAINST SOCIETY AND WHO HAD IN CONSEQUENCE TURNED TO MARX AND LENIN. HE HAD LITTLE MONEY, THE OBLIGATION TO SUPPORT A WIFE AND CHILD AND AMBITION. I DID NOT GET AN IMPRESSION OF A MAN WHO WOULD KILL A PERSON HE HAD NEVER MET FOR A CAUSE, WITHOUT OFFERS FROM THE APPARTUS TO WHICH HE APPARENTLY BELONGED WHEN THERE WAS NOTHING IN IT FOR HIM. FROM THE BEGINNING I THEREFOR HAD A FEELING--SUBJECTIVE AND UNPROVEN TO BE SURE-- THAT EITHER IN MEXICO OR THE UNITED STATES SOMEONE HAD GIVEN HIM AN ASSIGNMENT AND MONEY.

2. THIS FEELING WAS STRENGTHENED BY HIS ATTEMPT TO GET A TRANSIT VISA THROUGH CUBA AND, APPARENTLY, A RUSSIAN IMMIGRANT VISA SO THAT HE COULD SETTLE DOWN IN ODESSA. ASIDE FROM THE OBVIOUS PREPARATION FOR A "GET AWAY" THE DESTINATION OF ODESSA STRUCK ME AS ODD. WHY WOULD A PENNILESS, UNEDUCATED WORKER WITH A FAMILY WHOSE LAST RUSSIAN JOB APPARENTLY EARNED HIM BARELY ENOUGH TO KEEP BODY AND SOUL TOGETHER WANT TO GO TO ODESSA? ONE POSSIBLE EXPLANATION WOULD BE HE EXPECTED TO HAVE ENOUGH MONEY AND TO BE ABLE TO LIVE THE GOOD LIFE.

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DECLASSIFICATION AND/OR
RELEASE OF CIA INFORMATION
IN THIS DOCUMENT.~~

~~as sanitized
SCB 4/28/93~~

PAGE TWO RUESMO 30 S E C R E T

3. IT DID NOT SEEM PLAUSIBLE THAT KHRUSHCHEV IS THE TYPE OF PERSON WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN RECKLESS ENOUGH TO HIRE AN UNSTABLE

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1963 NOV 28 PM 2 10

4/30/92
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~~SECRET~~

6. ~~AT~~ THIS POINT WE GOT THE TWO INTERCEPTS OF THE DORTICOS-
HERNANDEZ ARMAS TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS. BOTH SHOW HAVANA'S GREAT
CONCERN THAT THE MEXICAN POLICE MAY HAVE QUESTIONED DURAN ABOUT
MONEY. THIS TENDS TO CORROBORATE ALVARADO'S STORY ABOUT THE

PAGE THREE RUESMO 30 S E C B E T

PERSON LIKE OSWALD FOR SUCH A FATEFUL UNDERTAKING. BUT CASTRO
IS THE KIND OF PERSON WHO WOULD AVENGE HIMSELF IN THIS WAY. HE IS THE
LATIN TYPE OF EXTREMIST WHO REACTS VISCERALLY RATHER THAN
INTELLECTUALLY AND APPARENTLY WITHOUT MUCH REGARD FOR RISKS.
HIS WHOLE LIFE STORY SHOWS THIS. AND THE UNPROFESSIONAL
ALMOST LACKADAISICAL WAY IN WHICH THE MONEY IS ALLEGED BY ALVARADO
TO HAVE BEEN PASSED TO OSWALD FITS WITH THE WAY CUBANS WOULD BE
EXPECTED TO ACT IF THE RUSSIANS WERE NOT GUIDING THEM. THIS SUPPOSITION
WAS STRENGTHENED BY MY RECOLLECTION OF AN AP STORY WITH A HAVANA
DATELINE ATTRIBUTING TO CASTRO THREATS AGAINST UNITED STATES
OFFICIALS IN REPRISAL FOR ALLEGED CIA SPONSORED RAIDS ON THE CUBAN
COAST.
4. WITH THESE INSTINCTIVE FEELINGS TO GO ON, I THOUGHT IT
HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT GIRLD DURAN, KNOWN TO US AS A PROMISCUOUS TYPE
WHO HAD RELATIONS WITH LECHUGA WHEN HE WAS AMBASSADOR HERE, TOLD THE
TRUTH WHEN SHE TOLD THE MEXICAN POLICE THAT OSWALD DID NOT DISCUSS
BUSINESS WITH ANYONE BUT HER, THAT ONLY THE VISA PROBLEM WAS DISCUSSED
WITH HER, AND THAT OSWALD LEFT THE CONSULATE ANGRY.
5. IT WAS AT THIS POINT THAT I REQUESTED THAT THE FBI SEND A PERSON
HERE IN THE HOPE THAT HE MIGHT KNOW ABOUT SOME FACT UNKNOWN TO US
HERE DEVELOPED AT THE US END OF THE INVESTIGATION WHICH WOULD GIVE
US A LEAD HERE. I HAD AND HAVE NO WORRY EITHER THE [CAS] [X] WE HAVE
OR THE LEGAL ATTACHE WERE HOLDING ANYTHING BACK FROM ME; WE HAVE
BEEN MEETING TOGETHER ALMOST CONTINUOUSLY. NEITHER WAS IT
BASED ON ANY LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THEIR PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY;
EACH IS THE BEST IN HIS FIELD THAT I HAVE WORKED WITH FOR TWENTY YEARS.
NOR WAS IT BASED ON ANY UNCERTAINTY ABOUT DOING THE BEST THAT COULD
BE DONE WITH THE ASSETS WE HAVE AND THE FACTS WE HAD TO GO ON.
AT THE SAME TIME, I WISH TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THE RESPONSIBILITY
FOR ALL THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THIS EMBASSY ARE SOLELY MINE
AND NOT THEIRS.

-2- 1201, NOVEMBER 28, FROM MEXICO CITY.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-3- 1201, NOVEMBER 28, FROM MEXICO CITY

[PASSING OF THE 6,500 DOLLARS. IN MY OPINION IT HAS PROBATIVE VALUE. HAVANA'S CONCERN IS UNDERSCORED BY ITS WRITTEN PROTEST TO MEXICO REPORTED IN YESTERDAY'S EMBTEL 1197.] (S)

7. ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE INTERCEPTS WE GOT ALVARADO'S STORY. SOMOZA COULD OF COURSE HAVE PUT HIM UP TO THE STORY OR HE MAY EXPECT MONEY FROM US OR WANT PUBLICITY. NEVERTHELESS THE WEALTH OF DETAIL HE GIVES IS STRIKING AND WITH ONE EXCEPTION WE HAVE THRU FAR BEEN UNABLE TO FIND EVIDENCE WHICH CONTRADICTS A SINGLE DETAIL. THIS EXCEPTION IS THAT WE CAN FIND NO EMBASSY EMPLOYEE WHO ADMITS TO HAVING TALKED TO ALVARADO (USING THE NAME JUAN KNECHT (PHONETIC) BEFORE THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY. HE HAS IMPRESSED EMBASSY OFFICERS WHO HAVE TALKED WITH HIM. HE HAS OFFERED TO TESTIFY EVEN THOUGH HE KNOWS HIS LIFE IS IN DANGER. HE IS A DOUBLE AGENT (I UNDERSTAND HE IS A COMMUNIST RECRUITED FOR TRAINING IN CUBA AND ALSO BEING PAID THE THE NICARAGUAN SERVICE) BUT I DO NOT SEE HOW THE RUSSIANS OR THE CUBANS COULD WANT HIS STORY TOLD. HIS STORY CONTRADICTS EVERYTHING WE HAVE SEEN HERE ABOUT COMMUNIST EFFORTS TO GET ACROSS THE IDEA THAT RIGHTISTS NOT COMMUNISTS WERE INVOLVED.] (S)

8. WE KNOW THAT OSWALD HAD TO GO TO CUBAN CONSULATE HERE [A KNOWN COVER FOR CASTRO INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS] FOR THE ADDRESS OF THE OBSCURE HOTEL HE WAS STAYING AT.. THIS HAS PROBATIVE VALUE TOO.

9. I DO NOT PRETEND THAT ALL OF THIS IS BY ANY MEANS PROOF THAT OSWALD WAS CASTRO'S AGENT. I UNDERSTAND HOW FATEFUL MIGHT BE THE CONCLUSION THAT HE WAS AND HOW DIFFICULT AND RISKY IT WOULD BE TO TRY TO DISENGAGE AND SEPARATE THE SOVIET UNION FROM CASTRO IF IT WERE TO BECOME ESTABLISHED FACT THAT CASTRO WAS INVOLVED. BUT I CANNOT AGREE WITH THE SUGGESTION IN DEPTTEL 969 THAT IT DOES NOT APPEAR THAT THERE IS SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO JUSTIFY ARRESTS AND INTERROGATIONS OF THOSE ALVARADO SAYS ARE INVOLVED. I MUST ALSO RESPECTFULLY RECORD MY DISAGREEMENT WITH MY LATEST INSTRUCTIONS THAT WE TAKE NO FURTHER INITIATIVE TO ENCOURAGE THE MEXICANS TO ARREST AND INTERROGATE.

10. BE THIS AS IT MAY, DEPARTMENT SHOULD CLEARLY UNDERSTAND THAT MEXICANS, ALREADY UNDER PRESSURE FROM CUBA FOR PAST ARRESTS AND FROM THE [CARDENAS-COMMIE] FACTION OF THE PRI, ALREADY WISH TO RELEASE DURAN AND MEXICANS ARE PRESSING US FOR CONCURRENCE. MEXICANS OBIOUSLY WILL BE GREATLY RELIEVED IF WE TAKE OFF PRESSURE FOR INVESTIGATION. IT WILL NOT BE EASY TO GET MEXICANS CRANKED UP AGAIN ONCE WE (S)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-4- 1201, NOVEMBER 28, FROM MEXICO CITY.

[TAKE THE PRESSURE OFF AND AS EMOTION CAUSED BY KENNEDY'S DEATH DECLINES HERE. MOREOVER, THERE CAN BE NO ASSURANCE THAT DURAN OR THE OTHER SUSPECTS WILL BE AVAILABLE LATER. THEREFORE REQUEST SOONEST INSTRUCTIONS ON FOLLOWING SPECIFIC POINTS:

PAGE FOUR RUESMO 30 S E C R E T

(A). MEXICANS MUST BE TOLD IMMEDIATELY WHETHER WE WANT THEM TO CONTINUE WITH INVESTIGATION. IF WE DO WE MUST NOT ONLY TAKE POSITIVE POSITION BUT GIVE THEM A BASIS FOR DOING SO, INCLUDING MAKING ALVARADO AVAILABLE TO MEXICANS. OTHERWISE MEXICAN WILL DROP CASE ON THEIR OWN AND THIS QUESTION WILL HAVE BEEN DECIDED BY DEFAULT. OUR SAYING NOTHING WILL BE INTERPRETED AS LACK OF US INTEREST.

(B). [MEXICANS ARE PRESSING US FOR IMMEDIATE AGREEMENT THAT DURAN SHOULD BE TURNED LOOSE BUT KEPT UNDER SURVEILLANCE. WHAT SHALL WE SAY. REQUEST IMMEDIATE ANSWER TO THIS SPECIFIC QUESTION.]

(C). IF ALVARADO IS NOT TO BE TURNED OVER TO MEXICANS WHAT DO WE DO WITH HIM? SHALL WE SEND THIS TO THE STATES FOR INTERROGATION? SHALL EMBASSY GIVE HIM [POLYGRAPH TEST] HERE? OR SHALL WE DO SOMETHING ELSE AND IF SO WHAT? GP-ONE

BT

CFN 1201 961 30 30 30 6,500 1197969 GP-ONE

MESSAGE UNSIGNED

Note: Advance copy to INR Duty Officer: 11/28/63. CWO-M

~~SECRET~~